

You Don't Build A City In A Day

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Summary: Oliver had irrevocably altered the relationship between him and Felicity while they were trying to take down Slade. Now, as they have finally coped with the aftermath and he has come to a conclusions as to how to go forward, changing circumstances in Felicity's life force him to reevaluate his decisions again. [Set in the summer before season 3]

You Don't Build A City In A Day

Diggle was suspicious. Truth be told, he had been suspicious for some time now and it looked as if whatever had caused this feeling would finally become clear. Admittedly, the last few weeks, months even, had been stressful, to say the least. Always one thing after the other. Sara Lance had come back from the dead, bringing the League of Assassins with her. And since death apparently wasn't a thing on Oliver's fantasy island, of course his former-best-friend-turned-arch-enemy also came to town not long after, as if to hold a 'Hey, I was stranded on Fantasy Island and everybody thought I was dead, but surprise, I'm not' club meeting of the hellish kind.

In the chaos that followed, Diggle lost sight of what was going on in his friends' life. He was not proud of it, but to be honest, with his unofficial position as Team Arrow's resident agony aunt, he had his hands full even at the best of times. Between Roy's and Oliver's worry about Thea, Oliver's attempts to resolve whatever had happened between himself and Felicity as well as his own coming to terms with having a baby with his ex-wife-turned-girlfriend-hopefully-future-ex-ex-wife, Team Arrow had enough issues to keep a psychologist busy for a lifetime, at the very least.

And now it looked as if whatever Felicity was working through needed her immediate and undivided attention. Something Oliver clearly

didn't like all that much.

"What do you mean you are leaving?" Oliver asked her, as if he had heard the word for the very first time in his life.

The IT expert didn't even look up from the lines of code she was working on. "It means that I packed my bag and I'm getting on a plane in the very near future. And by near future I mean in a few hours." She paused and mentally played back whatever she had said. Hm. Yeah, she could see where Oliver's sheer disbelief could stem from. "I didn't say I was leaving leaving. I'm going on a vacation. Taking a few days off. Maybe a week." Now she turned around to look at her boys, as she was wont to affectionately call them in her head. Not out loud. Never out loud. Not since the one time it accidentally slipped out during one of her infamous rambles and she had gotten herself into the mess of explaining that she didn't mean it like my boys my boys. Oh boy, she didn't need another round of that particular embarrassment. Thank you very much, but no. "Oh, don't look at me like that." Leaning back against her hand-picked, hard searched for, perfection of a chair, she focused on Oliver.

"At least I'm telling you. After the Undertaking you left without a word to anybody. For all Diggle and I knew you had fallen off the earth. If it were physically possible. Which it isn't. Because the earth is not flat. I mean, you could have fallen into a ditch, but that wouldn't classify as falling off earth." Snapping her mouth shut she stopped herself from breathing so she couldn't go into yet another ramble. No sir, enough of that already in her mind. No need to voice everything.

For a heartbeat or two, Diggle was yet again bystander in a moment in which Felicity and Oliver would disappear into their own bubble. In those moments it seemed as if nothing mattered except for the other person.

"Where are you going?" Oliver's voice sounded surprisingly soft and if Felicity had expected him to fight her on her decision to take a break, she didn't show it. Maybe her poker face was improving.

"Vegas."

"Vegas?" Oliver echoed rather unintelligently and shot Diggle a look as if to say 'Vegas? What is she doing there?', but Dig didn't pay him any attention, rather he focused on Felicity, as if she were a puzzle that needed solving.

The blonde finished writing another line of code and turned around again. "I haven't seen my mom in a while and before she decides to come visit me unannounced, I figured it would be a good time to go. The criminals are as quiet as they'll probably ever be and I dumbed down my programs enough so that all of you can operate them." She nervously wrung her hands and avoided Diggle's attempts at making eye contact in an expert fashion. "And realistically, it's probably going to be a long time, before I can get away again. You got QC back, but it's going to take a while before it's up and running smoothly. And let's face it, since I'm not your assistant anymore, my workload has lessened extremely. Not that I'm complaining. I justâ€¦" She shrugged her shoulders helplessly.

"I need a break", Diggle finished for her, nodding in understanding.

Felicity smiled weakly, thankful for her friend's support. She was going to need it, if the way Oliver tensed was anything to go by. So much for hoping that for once he wouldn't pull the wounded grumpy bear routine. Squaring her shoulders she fixed him with a determined look. "I'm not going to ask for permission."

Once again Diggle was reduced to being the bystander to their silent battle of wills.

"Okay," Oliver finally relented. "We need you rested."

Satisfied to have gotten her way at least once Felicity nodded and turned around to finish with all the upgrades to their system she deemed necessary for her boys to survive the next few days without her. And hopefully without getting themselves hurt because they were caught unaware by something she could have easily warned them about if she would have been here.

With her back to her two partners she didn't see the way Oliver's shoulders dropped slightly and with a long lasting glance he went off to the work out area, obviously determined to take his frustration out on another training dummy. Diggle sighed silently, shaking his head at his two friends. When would they ever work out whatever was between them? Probably when I'm grey and old, he thought to himself while dragging a second chair next to Felicity's and sitting down.

For a few moments she continued working without paying him any mind, ignoring his probing gaze. When she had finally finished with everything she had wanted to get done before leaving her boys on their own, she exited the last program and nodded satisfied. Even Roy should be able to work the computers with the shortcuts she had just finished programming. And she vowed to have all members of Team Arrow undergo a rigorous computer training program after she came back. Just to be on the safe side. Although the thought of Diggle's stubby finger's typing away on her ergonomic keyboards or Roy eating whatever they had ordered that day and spreading the food all over her work station made her rethink that decision. And let's not get started about Oliver screwing with the chair she had taken so long to adjust for maximum comfort.

She sighed. Maybe she shouldn't go. There's no telling what her fellow team members would do to her system.

"Do you need me to drive you to the airport?" Diggle startled her out of her train of thought. Maybe that was just what she needed, before she really changed her mind and stayed, somebody else driving her.

Felicity patted his arm and grinned at him. "Thank you. I was going to take a taxi." She refrained from making another joke about him taking his job as a driver serious. That had already gotten him annoyed with her once in the last few weeks. No need for a repeat, thank you very much.

She ducked under the desk to check if she had forgotten any shoes - so what if she took them off after a long day of work and sometimes

forgot a pair - and narrowly avoided bumping her head when Oliver startled her by saying, "Let Dig drive you, please."

Half her mind was set on tearing him a new one for scaring her like that, yet again, while the other half contemplated getting a bell for him, so he wouldn't be able to sneak up on her again. (She knew for a fact that it freaked Roy out as well. Not that he had the guts to say anything. Which she kind of understood. Oliver would only make him slap water again, and to tell the truth, she was probably as sick of seeing Roy slap a bowl of water as he was of having to do it. Better for all involved if she didn't say anything.)

In the end she settled for teasing him. "Look at you. Learning to say please." She briefly smiled at him, before grabbing her jacket from her chair and issued Oliver with a last stern warning. "Try not to break my computers while I'm gone."

Oliver raised both arms in a gesture of surrendering. "Don't worry, we won't hurt your babies." At least he didn't plan on doing anything that might damage one of her computers. There was no telling what she would do in retaliation.

Felicity narrowed her eyes at him, took another look around, as if she wasn't sure she'd ever see all of it again, and followed Diggle, who had already left to get to bring the car around.

After a quick detour to get her suitcase from her apartment they were finally well on their way to the airport. For a while no one talked, Felicity watching the scenery pass them by on the highway and Diggle contemplating how to best approach the topic of her sudden vacation.

"Everything okay with your mom?" He chanced a quick glance at her, before focusing on the traffic again.

The blonde made a point of not looking at her friend. "Can't a girl visit her only family without having a reason?" For a moment she continued staring out of the window. When it didn't seem as if Diggle would carry on with the conversation she helplessly shrugged her shoulders. "Look, sometimes a girl needs her mom."

"You know you can talk to me if something is bothering you? I know Oliver offered to listen whenever you need someone, but if you want to talk about whatever happened between the two of you while we took down Slade, I'm here for you." It was clear that whatever was going on with her, she didn't want to talk about it. For now he allowed her to take the easy way out, but Diggle vowed to himself that if she came back and whatever she was preoccupied with hadn't resolved itself, he would make her talk.

"I know, Dig. Thank you. You are the best friend a girl could ask for." What she had done to deserve a friend like Diggle, she didn't know, but who was she to question it? "And I'll probably take you up on that offer after I get back," she promised and it made it easy for Diggle to let the issue go for now.

Soon they had reached the airport. Despite Diggle's vehement protest Felicity refused to let him accompany her to the check in counter. Instead she had hugged him close and told him, "Take care of Lyla."

Maybe Felicity shouldn't have worried so much about about Diggle's ability to take care of his girlfriend, but rather about his ability to keep Oliver sane while she was gone. Truth be told, two days after Felicity had left, Diggle had given up on trying to talk sense into Oliver. Whether his friend wanted to admit it or not, her absence took its toll on him. But seeing as he refused to talk about what was bothering him - not that it took a genius to figure that out, at least not after having spent the last two years closely working together with the two people responsible for his current job as resident vigilantesitter - all Diggle could do was let his friend wallow in self pity and if possible keep him from harming their training equipment or Roy. Or both. Depending on whether the newest addition to Team Arrow could keep from subtly teasing Oliver whenever he got the chance, or not. If Felicity decided to stay away for much longer, he would have to have a serious talk with their youngster. Or he could sit back and watch Oliver making him slap bowls of water again.

"Alright, who left the lights on? I swear it wasn't me this time," Roy declared as soon as he had entered the lair, lest Oliver mercilessly wipe the floor with him again under the guise of calling training, just because his protÃ©gÃ© forgot to turn down the lights again before heading out.

"Felicity!" he exclaimed when he saw the familiar blonde sitting in front of the computers again. Roy barely bothered with putting his bow down properly - he was sure Oliver would be on his case again for that, but right now he could live with it - before hugging Felicity. "Don't leave me alone with them again, please", he whispered into her ear, loud enough for Diggle, who had come down after him, to hear.

The blonde chuckled and hugged Roy tighter. "Awww, did you miss me?"

"Nah," the young man shrugged nonchalantly and finally let go of her, so Diggle could greet her with one of his famous hugs, "wouldn't even have noticed you were gone if it weren't for Mr. Broody and all the bruises he gave me."

Diggle shook his head in amusement. That boy certainly had a death wish.

"Well, I definitely didn't miss you, Harper. You forfeited your right to a souvenir, just so you know," Felicity told Roy, but the fond way she reached up to ruffle his hair gave her true feelings away.

"It's good to have you back," Diggle told her and took a minute to study her. She looked better than before she left. More rested, lighter. As if a huge weight had been lifted off her shoulders. He realized now was not the time to get answers from her, but later he would make sure to talk to her alone.

"Did all the testosterone get to you?" Felicity continued teasing her quasi younger brother while hugging her quasi older brother.

"It's too quiet without you. Oliver's not known for chattering away." Meet John Diggle. Master of the understatement.

"Where is he, anyway?" Felicity asked after she had finally let go of Diggle and still hadn't seen Oliver.

Her question made said man step away from the display case from where he had watched their reunion after he had put away his bow, not sure if he was invited as well or not.

"How's your mom?" he asked, slowly coming nearer. He tried to hide the insecurity that plagued his every interaction with Felicity since the fateful moment in the mansion, but judging by the knowing glint in Diggle's eye whenever he talked to Felicity, or was somewhere around Felicity in general, he probably didn't do to good a job.

Felicity's smile grew wider as she finally saw him again. "She's good", she said. "Surprised to see me and everything. But she's good."

Silence settled over the lair, Oliver content with just having Felicity back where - in his opinion - she belonged, Diggle and Roy not wanting to disturb whatever moment their two friends were having and Felicity trying hard not to try and wring her hands or worse, start babbling. Which, of course, in the end she failed to accomplish.

Unnerved by the silence, she began, "So, you know how I told you I would talk to you after I came back?" She looked from Diggle to Roy, for the moment trying not to lose whatever courage she had left by looking at Oliver. "Yeah. I thought about how to start and everything, because, let's face it, I knew I would start babbling, and as soon as I start babbling there's no knowing what will come out of my mouth." She took a quick breath, but didn't stop talking. "And maybe we should sit down for this. I'm sure I should sit down for this, because my legs are feeling all wobbly again, and I'm sure this time it isn't because my heel is close to breaking, not like at prom-"

She started gesturing around, trying to remember if they even had four chairs down here - and if they didn't have four chairs why didn't they have enough chairs for everybody to sit down? And why was she thinking about this now? "Felicity, calm down." She nearly jumped out of her skin, not having noticed that Diggle had come closer again and had startled her out of her tirade by putting a hand on her shoulder.

Like a deer caught in the headlights she stared at him and said, "I'm pregnant." As soon as she had said the words she snapped her mouth shut, as if by doing so she could talk back what she had just said, as if it weren't true.

And suddenly the puzzle pieces fell into place.

Felicity seemed surprised that those words had really left her mouth and Diggle decided to take pity on her. God knew what would happen if he didn't take charge now. Well, to be honest, he envisioned they would have to replace yet another training dummy and he or Roy or both of them would get bruised again because Oliver needed someone to take his anger out on.

"I didn't know you were seeing anybody," he said softly, conscious of

his position right between Felicity and Oliver.

"I'm not," she denied, but she wouldn't be Felicity if she left it at that. Of course she tried to explain. "I mean, obviously I was seeing a guy. And it wasn't seeing as in dating, more in like seeing each other naked. But just a few times. And apparently that's enough to seal the deal."

"Felicity." This time it was Oliver trying to get her back on topic and judging by the surprised raise of Roy's eyebrow, Diggle was certain that their youngest member was also taken by surprise that their de facto leader took part in their discussion instead of just listening and later stalking away and sulking over it.

"Right", Felicity said to herself. "But he's not in the picture is what I meant to say."

As if on cue both Diggle and Oliver sighed audibly, although suffice to say that Oliver sounded slightly relieved.

"Are we happy about this?" Roy inserted himself back into the conversation, when nobody else seemed to want to say anything.

Felicity smiled a little. "We are getting there."

"Good. That's good," Oliver nodded, somewhat lost in his own world.

Roy, however, took the chance to might light of their changed situation. "You know that I'm going to tell you 'I told you so', right?" With a spring in his step he walked up to Felicity, slung an arm over her shoulders, and dragged her away with him. "I told you that guy was bad news."

Roy's muffled 'oof' told Diggle that Felicity had retaliated by punching his arm. Good on her. "Oh, shut it, Harper," they heard him say as they watched them walk away.

Squaring his shoulders Diggle mentally prepared for talking some sense into his friend again. By the looks of it, Oliver was in dire need of it. Things certainly never got boring around here.

End
file.